

psychosocial support and skills training to enable widows to gain the personal dignity of self-sufficiency.

I would also point out that village leaders have agreed to cooperate with World Compassion on this project. World Compassion has a long, successful track record of working with Afghans in other programs to provide for their basic needs, and it is my hope that the State Department will help them continue to do so.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I appreciate my friend taking the time to highlight the activities of World Compassion and hope that the State Department acts on the recommendations from the House report.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

On Monday, February 28, 2005, two men were severely beaten outside of their hotel room in New Mexico. According to police reports, they were targeted because of their sexual orientation. The two men, who were in an openly gay relationship, were followed back to the hotel by a group of people who were yelling antigay comments at the victims. The assailants then assaulted the two men and fled the scene. The incident is being investigated as a hate crime.

I believe that the Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

ASSAULT WEAPONS BAN

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I am pleased to join Senator FEINSTEIN as a cosponsor of her legislation to reauthorize the assault weapons ban. I voted for the original 1994 assault weapons ban and for the amendment to reauthorize the ban in the 108th Congress.

When the 1994 assault weapons ban expired on September 13, 2004, criminals and terrorists gained potential easy access to 19 of the highest powered and most lethal firearms produced. In addition to banning 19 specific weapons, the assault weapons ban also prohibited the sale of semiautomatic weapons that incorporated a detachable magazine and two or more specific military features. These fea-

tures included folding/telescoping stocks, protruding pistol grips, bayonet mounts, threaded muzzles or flash suppressors, barrel shrouds, or grenade launchers. Common sense tells us that there is no reason for civilians to have easy access to guns with these military style features.

During the 108th Congress, I joined with the majority of my Senate colleagues in adopting an amendment to reauthorize the assault weapons ban for another 10 years. However, the bill to which it was attached was later derailed. Despite the overwhelming support of the law enforcement community, the ongoing threat of terrorism, bipartisan support in the Senate, and the pleas of Americans who have already lost loved ones to assault weapons tragedies, the ban was allowed to expire, as the President and the Republican Congressional leadership were unwilling to act.

Despite the National Rifle Association's assertions that the ban is ineffective, unnecessary, and that guns labeled as assault weapons are rarely used in violent crimes, the need for the assault weapons ban is clear. Just last week, AK-47 assault rifles, like the ones included in the original assault weapons ban, were reportedly used in two separate shootings in Texas and California that left four people dead and four others seriously injured, three of whom were police officers. In Tyler, TX, a gunman armed with an AK-47, wearing a military flak jacket and a bulletproof vest, opened fire outside a courthouse, killing his ex-wife and wounding his son. In the ensuing shootout with police, the gunman was reportedly able to fire as many as 50 rounds at police and innocent bystanders before fleeing in his truck. He was finally shot in another gun battle with police a few miles away. The same day in Los Angeles, a man reportedly armed with an AK-47 walked into his workplace and shot two of his coworkers to death following a dispute. He later turned himself in at a Los Angeles police station.

Unfortunately, assault weapons such as the ones reportedly used in these two shootings as well as many other similar assault weapons are once again being legally produced and sold as a result of the expiration of the assault weapons ban. I again urge my colleagues to act to help prevent tragedies like these by enacting a common sense ban on assault weapons.

SENATOR HIRAM R. REVELS

Mr. OBAMA. Mr. President, I rise to recognize an important anniversary in the history of this Nation.

One hundred and thirty-five years ago on this day, Hiram R. Revels was sworn in as a U.S. Senator from Mississippi. On that day, February 25, 1870, Senator Revels became the first African American to ever serve in the U.S. Congress.

But Hiram Revel's story started in a place very far from Washington, DC. He

was born to free parents in 1822 and grew up as an apprentice to a barber in North Carolina. But Hiram wanted to learn more and see more, and so he left for Indiana and then Ohio, where he furthered his education. He was soon ordained a minister by the African Methodist Church, and traveled to congregations all over the Midwest and the South until he finally ended up in Baltimore.

At the beginning of the Civil War, he helped recruit African-American troops for the Union, and he ended up serving as a chaplain for a Mississippi regiment of free Blacks. He stayed in Mississippi after the war, and continued serving as a pastor at various local churches. In 1868, and he ran and was elected alderman. Respected by both Whites and African Americans, he was soon elected as a Mississippi State senator. Then, in 1870, just 5 years after the end of the very war fought for his freedom, Hiram Revels was elected the first African-American U.S. Senator in history.

Like so many of our own, Hiram's story is America's story. The story of the seemingly impossible occurring in a land where good people will give everything to make it possible. The story of hope winning out against all odds. The story of one man's improbable achievement paving the way for so many others.

Did Hiram ever know what he was destined for in that barber shop? When he was sweeping that floor in North Carolina and so many of his brothers and sisters were enslaved, did he ever dream that he would end up a U.S. Senator?

We don't know. But we do know that he did dream of bigger things.

He dreamed of an education, and so even though many kids like him didn't do it, he went to college. He dreamed of helping others, and so even though it involved sacrifice, he became a minister. He dreamed of a free America, and so even though it could have cost him his life, he joined the Union. And he dreamed of lifting up his community, and so even though it wasn't done by people of his color, he ran for office.

He dreamed of making this world a better place, and in doing so, he found a place in history. And so we remember this day—his day—as a symbol of what is possible for those of us who are willing to make it so in this magical place we call America.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

• Mr. OBAMA. Mr. President, I rise to recognize and remember the life of Earl Langdon Neal.

Mr. Neal was one of the finest lawyers and civic leaders Chicago has ever known. From mayors to citizens, business leaders to college students, he was a trusted friend and inspiring mentor to many—including myself.

Earl earned his law degree from Michigan Law School in 1952. Following graduation, he served his country in the U.S. Army until 1955, when he returned to Chicago to join his father's law firm, Neal & Neal.

On their very first case, Earl and his father were forced to commute 170 miles from Chicago to Lincoln simply because there were no hotels in Lincoln that would accept African Americans. But he went anyway because, as his son has said, it wasn't just a job for Earl—it was a way of life.

It was a way of life that led him to serve the city of Chicago as a special assistant corporation counsel responsible for countless land acquisition projects, including the Dan Ryan Expressway, O'Hare's expansion, and the Chicago city colleges, a way of life that led him to start his own practice and earn a place on the University of Illinois board of trustees, a way of life that made almost every person who came to know him speak of him as a warm, compassionate man who put the well-being of his clients above all else.

Earl's passion for his work wasn't complicated. He simply looked around his community and wanted to make it better. And in so many ways, from the places he made possible, to the people's lives he touched, he did. We honor his life, pray for his family, and will miss him dearly. ●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting nominations which were referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:23 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, without amendment:

S. Con. Res. 13. Concurrent resolution congratulating ASME on their 125th anniversary, celebrating the achievements of ASME members, and expressing the gratitude of the American people for ASME's contributions.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolutions, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 5. Concurrent resolution providing for the acceptance of a statue of Sarah Winnemucca, presented by the people of Nevada, for placement in National Statuary Hall, and for other purposes.

H. Con. Res. 45. Concurrent resolution recognizing the benefits and importance of school-based music education, and for other purposes.

H. Con. Res. 63. Concurrent resolution permitting the use of the rotunda of the Capitol for a ceremony as part of the commemoration of the days of remembrance of victims of the Holocaust.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following concurrent resolution was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H. Con. Res. 45. Concurrent resolution recognizing the benefits and importance of school-based music education, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 802(c), the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry was discharged from further consideration of the following joint resolution, and placed on the calendar:

S.J. Res. 4. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the rule submitted by the Department of Agriculture under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, relating to risk zones for introduction of bovine spongiform encephalopathy.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-1153. A communication from the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Monetary Policy Report to the Congress"; to the Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs.

EC-1154. A communication from the Secretary of the Commission, Bureau of Consumer Protection, Federal Trade Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Alternative Fuels and Vehicles Rule, 16 C.F.R. Part 309" (RIN3084-0094) received on March 1, 2005; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-1155. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Citrus Canker; Quarantined Areas" (Docket No. 05-005-1) received on March 1, 2005; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1156. A communication from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Karnal Bunt; Revision of Regulations for Importing Wheat" ((RIN0579-AB74) (Docket No. 02-057-2)) received on March 1, 2005; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-1157. A communication from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled

"List of Approved Spent Fuel Storage Casks: HI-STORM 100 Revision" (RIN3150-AH64) received on March 1, 2005; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1158. A communication from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "List of Approved Spent Fuel Storage Casks: NUHOMS-24PT4 Revision" (RIN3150-AH63) received on March 1, 2005; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1159. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Peanuts, Tree Nuts, Milk, Soybeans, Eggs, Fish, Crustacea, and Wheat; Exemption from the Requirements of a Tolerance; Technical Correction" (FRL No. 7689-9) received on March 1, 2005; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1160. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revisions to the California State Implementation Plan, El Dorado County Air Quality Management District (Mountain Counties Portion), Imperial County Air Pollution Control District, and South Coast Air Quality Management District" (FRL No. 7874-6) received on March 1, 2005; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1161. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Pennsylvania; Revised Format of 40 CFR Part 52 for Materials Being Incorporated by Reference" (FRL No. 7843-2) received on March 1, 2005; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1162. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Mississippi: Final Authorization of State Hazardous Waste Management Program Revision" (FRL No. 7875-7) received on March 1, 2005; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1163. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revisions to California State Implementation Plan, Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District" (FRL No. 7871-1) received on March 1, 2005; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1164. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Approval and Promulgation of State Implementation Plan for Designated Facilities and Pollutants; Forsyth County, Mecklenburg County and Buncombe County, North Carolina, and Chattanooga-Hamilton County, Knox County, and Memphis-Shelby County, Tennessee" (FRL No. 7877-3) received on March 1, 2005; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-1165. A communication from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Revisions to California State Implementation Plan, Great Basin Unified Air Pollution